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ABSTRACT

This report examines the stimulated recall data gathered from 67 audiotapes of library users who requested online bibliographic searches and who later viewed videotapes of their presearch interviews. The analysis was part of a study which gathered data on 80 presearch interviews in seven medical libraries in order (1) to identify verbal and nonverbal behaviors that facilitate, maintain, or impede information exchange in interviews between search intermediaries and search requesters: (2) to identify tasks that are accomplished by the librarian to facilitate information exchange: and (3) to objectively code videotaped presearch interviews in terms of the extent to which those tasks were accomplished. Chapters detail the nature of the project, stimulated recall data collection procedures, and requester responses. Tables display data related to the intermediary's understanding of the requester's information need, requester satisfaction, librarian demeanor, and requester demeanor. (FM)

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DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF STIMULATED RECALL SESSIONS WITH REQUESTERS THAT FOLLOWED PRESEARCH INTERVIEWS

by

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I. The Presearch Interview Project

This work is one of five related research efforts of the Presearch Interview Project. The entire project will be briefly described below. A more complete description is contained in a progress report* and the final report for the project.

We view information exchange as the primary purpose of the presearch interview. The librarian must find out enough about the information needs of the requester to attempt to meet them by using a computer-based literature search service. The requester must find out not only what the librarian needs to know in order to perform the best possible search, but also something about how the system works, charges, delivery time, etc. At the present time the information need can only be met through the librarian; this makes information exchange during the presearch interview critical.

The purpose of this project as a whole was to objectively indicate the adequacy of information exchange in the interview and show what behaviors and tasks performed by the librarian can affect the ultimate success of the search. We expected to be able to identify important reactions of the requester to the presearch interview itself. And aside from search results, we felt that the presearch

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*Progress report for the NLM grant entitled "Evaluation of the Presearch Interview" (Grant No. 1 R01 LM03 074 01), May 1, 1979-January 15, 1980 (Crouch and Atherton, 1980).

interview is a human encounter of which the requester is very aware and that it can affect the requester's subjective evaluation of the computer-based literature search service as a whole.

The entire project involved this research, an analysis of verbal behaviors (Crouch, 1981), a task analysis (Atherton, 1981), an analysis of nonverbal behaviors (Cenova, 1981), and an analysis of requester and librarian satisfaction with the interview (Tessier, 1981). It grew out of the interests expressed in "New Measures of User Satisfaction with Computer-Based Literature Searches" (Tessier, Crouch, and Atherton, submitted for publication to Special Libraries, 1976). Extensive demographic and situational data were also gathered. The previously mentioned progress report describes the latter in detail. The data that are important for this research are the audiotapes (and transcripts) of the stimulated recall sessions with requesters which were held immediately following the presearch interviews and before the online search. These are described in more detail below.

II. Overview of Data Gathering for PIP

Seven libraries were chosen as sites for gathering data. Two were located in medical centers, two in medical colleges, one in a specialized hospital (Veterans Administration), and two in city hospitals. The number of librarians who participated in the study at a site varied from one to

six; in total, 19 different librarians participated.

A total of 82 interviews were videotaped. In addition to the videotapes, situational information (such as, was a terminal used during the interview), requester satisfaction questionnaires, librarian satisfaction questionnaires, audiotapes of the stimulated recall sessions with requesters and with librarians, and demographic questionnaires filled out by requesters and librarians were obtained during the data gathering process.

At each library the steps taken in data gathering were:

1. Explain the procedures to librarians and obtain their signature on permission forms.

2. Meet requester and obtain signature on permission form. (Most requesters came for an interview by appointment knowing that videotaping and the research activities would take place.)

3a. Videotape interview.
3b. Record situational data (e.g., was a terminal used).

4a. Librarian fills out satisfaction questionnaire.
4b. Requester fills out satisfaction questionnaire and demographic data sheet.

5. Requester participates in "debriefing" interview" (i.e., stimulated recall session).

6. Repeat #2-5 for all interviews.

7. Each librarian participates in "debriefing" interview for 1-3 of the interviews they videotaped. (Librarians that were taped in more than three interviews were not "debriefed" for all of them.)

8. Each librarian fills out a "task analysis" questionnaire and a demographic data questionnaire.

The videotapes of all the interviews and the audiotapes of the "debriefing" sessions were transcribed in full. The

quantifiable data (situational information, satisfaction measures, and demographic data) were stored in computer files and documented in a project report (Tessier, 1980). The development of satisfaction measures and an analysis of the satisfaction data is given in a report by Tessier (1981). Other reports make use of the videotapes and/or their transcripts, as well as the situational data, in analyzing the interviews themselves (Cochrane, 1981; Crouch, 1981; Genova, 1981). This report examines the stimulated recall data gathered from the requesters at the various interview sites. Stimulated recall data from the librarians were gathered but will not be reported at this time.

III. Stimulated Recall Data Collection Procedures

The purpose of the sessions was to obtain as much information as possible from the requesters about the tasks that should be accomplished in the presearch interview, and about the behaviors that might facilitate or interfere with the conduct of such interviews. As originally planned, these sessions would only be reviewed to help with the coding design for the verbal behaviors analysis (Crouch), but it became clear that the data might be of some general interest in their own right.

Eighty-two stimulated recall sessions were conducted with requesters by the project interviewer. Due, however, to technical difficulties at one of the interview sites, all of the audiotapes of the stimulated recall sessions with

requesters conducted at that site (15 in all) were lost. A total of 67 audiotapes of the stimulated recall sessions were thus available for analysis. Procedures for the sessions are described in more detail below and in the Progress Report (Crouch and Atherton) dated February 1, 1980.

In a stimulated recall session, the videotape of an interview was viewed by the project interviewer and the requester. The project interviewer (a medical librarian) would stop the videotape at appropriate points and ask both predetermined and spontaneous questions. All of these sessions were audiotaped and later transcribed. The interviewer was expected to obtain responses for as many of the predetermined questions as possible (see Appendix I to this paper). In addition, the interviewer was expected to ask questions which she, as a medical librarian, thought would be revealing based on what was observed in the interview. In addition, the requester was asked to volunteer observations and comments and to ask for the videotape to be stopped at any time.

The list of predetermined questions designed to address each of the major tasks important to the presearch interview was drawn up by several project staff members. In these questions they asked for: (1) an assessment of how well the tasks had been accomplished, (2) the identification of behaviors that facilitated or inhibited accomplishment of the tasks, (3) an assessment of the appropriateness or importance of some of the tasks for the interview, and (4) summary information concerning overall impressions of, or

reactions to, the interview. Appendix I to this paper lists these questions.

After the audiotapes of the sessions were transcribed, each transcript was labeled in order to identify the topics discussed in the individual sessions. The major tasks important to the presearch interview mentioned in an interview were identified using the list of predetermined questions (Appendix I) to facilitate topic identification. Any information which fell outside of the categories found on this list, whether sought during the recall sessions by the interviewer or volunteered by the requester, was identified as such (for the sake of convenience, such information was called "miscellaneous"). The project interviewer and a research assistant independently labeled all portions of all of the transcripts. When a specific topic was identified in a transcript, the portion of the transcript in which it occurred was placed in brackets and assigned a "topic" number. These topic numbers correspond with the numbers assigned to the questions in the above-mentioned list (see Appendix I). Once all the transcripts were labeled, the project interviewer and the research assistant compared their results and resolved their discrepancies in topic identification. Actually, there were very few discrepancies. This may be due in part to the fact that the question list used for topic identification had also been used as a guide for the interviewer when she conducted the stimulated recall sessions. Once the discrepancies were resolved, the research assistant cut one

set of transcripts into slips bearing responses on particular topics. These slips were then placed in folders, each of which contained all responses on a particular topic.

The next step in the analysis process was to examine the responses on specific topics. Again, the project interviewer and the research assistant worked independently. They examined the individual topic folders for frequent or noteworthy responses. These responses were then categorized by type. "Yes," "Uncertain," "No," and "No Answer" formed the most common response groups for "closed" questions (those requiring a "yes" or "no" answer). Responses to open questions (those to which respondents much supply "who," "where," and "how" information) were categorized by identifying the common ideas that various respondents expressed. ("Cooperation" and "self-confidence," for example, are ideas which might be described in different ways by requesters.) Those responses which did not fit into identifiable categories became part of an "Other" group. (This category only occurred when "open questions" elicited a variety of extremely particular or ideosyncratic responses from a number of requesters.)

When all responses were categorized for the topics, the project interviewer and research assistant exchanged folders and categorized the responses a second time. A third project staff member then spot-checked the folders for consistency. The problems in categorization that turned up involved semantic distinctions rather than major conceptual discrepancies.

Although 17 topic areas were identified in the list of

questions designed for use in the stimulated recall sessions, not all of these topics proved equally informative. In consultation with other project staff members, the project interviewer (and research assistant) chose nine topics for analysis. These selected questions/topics are listed in Appendix II of this paper and the data gathered on these selected topics are described in detail below.

IV. Description of Requester Responses

When the nine questions selected for analysis were examined closely, it became apparent that they fit into two broadly defined groups: (1) information need/information exchange, and (2) interpersonal aspects. The first group is made up of questions that relate to the information needs of the requesters involved in presearch interviews, and to the exchange of information between librarians and requesters that result in the selection of search terms and formulation of a search strategy. These topics are dealt with below in the Information Need/Information Exchange section of this paper. The second group is made up of questions that relate to the interpersonal aspects of the interview, such as the effect of demeanor on the success of the interview. These topics are dealt with below in the Interpersonal Aspects section of the paper.

It should be noted here that the following data tables contain tallies only of the responses gathered from requesters during the stimulated recall sessions. Not all of the

selected questions were asked in all of the stimulated recall sessions (of which there was a total of 67). In some cases, questions were asked in only half of the sesssions. And, in many instances (which are noted in the tables that follow), individual requesters responded more than once to particular questions. Thus, the total number of responses tallied and the total number of respondents varies from question to question.

A. Information Need/Information Exchange

The most general question on "information need that requesters were asked in the stimulated recall session was, "Do you feel that the librarian understood your actual need for information?" The majority (76%) of requester responses to this question was affirmative. In addition to unequivocal "yes" responses, there was a group of responses to the effect that, though the requester's information need was not initially understood by the librarian, an understanding of the information need had been achieved by the end of the interview (nine percent of the responses fell into this group). Another group of responses (6%) fell into the "incomplete understanding" category (i.e., librarians partially understood requesters' needs). A complete breakdown of responses to this question is found in Table 1.

When requesters answered that they felt the librarian understood their information need, a follow-up question was asked: "What made you feel that the librarian understood your information need?" Although this was an "open" question,

TABLE 1. Librarian's Understanding of the Requester's Information Need

Question: "Do you feel that the librarian understood your actual need for information?"

	Number of Responses		
Yes	52	76%	Further analysis in Table 1.1, below
Not initially, but by the end of interview	6	9%	
Incomplete understanding	4	6%	
Uncertain	4	6%	
No	2	3%	
Total responses	68*	100%	

*This question was answered in 64 sessions. Sixty requesters answered it once, and four requesters answered it twice, for a total of 68 responses.

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there was surprising significant agreement among requesters as to those factors which indicate that a librarian understands an information need. The two most common responses were: (1) that the librarian used or selected proper terms in formulating the search (38.4% of total responses); and (2) that the librarian asked useful questions, or questions that revealed some knowledge of the subject (20% of total responses). Response tallies for this question are found in Table 1.1.

In many of the stimulated recall sessions, requesters were asked if they were satisfied with their presentation of their information need to the librarian. Slightly more than

TABLE 1.1. Reasons Requesters Felt Librarians Understood Their Information Needs

Question: "What made you feel that the librarian understood your information need?"

	Number of Responses	
Proper words/terms used, contributed, looked up, or selected by librarian	23	38.4%
Librarian asked useful questions, or questions that revealed subject knowledge	12	20.0%
Search had been previously discussed with librarian	5	8.3%
Requester felt proper terms had been given to librarian	3	5.0%
Librarian's non-verbal behavior indicated understanding	2	3.3%
Other (all responses in this category were given only once)	15	25.0%
Total responses	60*	100.0%

*This question was answered by the 52 requesters who answered "yes" in Table 1 above. Forty-four requesters gave answers that fit into one category, and eight requesters gave answers that fit into two categories, for a total of 60 responses.

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half (55%) of the group that responded to this question felt they had presented their information needs adequately. About one-quarter of the group (24%) felt they had not presented their needs successfully. Table 2 summarizes responses to this question.

TABLE 2. Requester's Satisfaction with the Presentation of His/Her Information Need.

Question: "Were you satisfied with your presentation of your information need to the librarian?"

	Number of Responses	
Yes	18	55%
Uncertain	5	15%
No	8	24%
No clear answer	2	6%
Total responses	33*	100%

*This question was asked in 33 sessions.

Most of the requesters were asked if they thought the librarians knew why they needed information. Forty-one percent of requesters asked felt that librarians knew why they needed information, 23% were uncertain if librarians knew, and 36% didn't think the librarians knew. Table 3 lists this data.

Requesters who were asked if they thought the librarian knew why they needed information were also asked if they felt it was important for the librarians to know why they needed information. Most respondents to this question (75.4%) felt it important that the librarian understand why they need information. This contrasts with the smaller percentage of respondents to the previous question (41%) who actually felt that the librarians knew why they needed information. Table 3.1 summarizes data for this question.

TABLE 3. Librarian's Knowledge of Why the Requester Needed Information

Question: "Do you think the librarian knew why you needed the information?"

	Number of Responses		
Yes	25	41%	Further analysis found in Table 3.1.1 below
Uncertain	14	23%	Further analysis found in Table 3.1.2 below
No	22	36%	Further analysis found in Table 3.1.3 below
Total responses	61*	100%	

*Sixty-one requesters answered this question.

Of those requesters who felt that the librarians understood the reason for their information need (the "yes" group from Table 3 above), a majority (84%) also felt that this understanding was important for the librarian to have. Table 3.1.1 contains further data on the responses of the "yes" group.

Of those requesters who felt uncertain that the librarian understood the reason for their information need (the "uncertain" group in Table 3 above), almost all (93%) felt that this understanding was important for the librarian to have. Table 3.1.2 contains further data on the responses of the "uncertain" group.

And finally, of those requesters who did not feel that the librarian understood the reason for their information need (the "no" group from Table 3 above), just over half (55%) felt that this understanding was important for the li-

TABLE 3.1. Importance of Librarian's Knowledge of Why Requester Needs Information

Question: "Is it important for the librarian to know why the information is needed?"

	Number of Responses		
Yes	46	75.4%	Further breakdown of the responses to this question found in Tables 3.1.1, 3.1.2, and 3.1.3 below
Uncertain	2	3.3%	
No	11	18.0%	
No answer	2	3.3%	
Total responses	61*	100.0%	

*The 61 requesters who answered the question in Table 3 above also provided responses to this question.

TABLE 3.1.1. Tally of "Yes" Group Responses from Table 3.

Yes	21	84%
No	2	8%
No answer	2	8%
Total responses	25	100

TABLE 3.1.2. Tally of "Uncertain" Group Responses from Table 3.

Yes	13	93%
No	1	7%
Total responses	14	100%

TABLE 3.1.3. Tally of "No" Group Responses from Table 3.

Yes	12	55%
Uncertain	2	9%
No	8	36%
Total responses	22	100%

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brarian to have. This percentage is noticeably lower than that found in the "yes" and "uncertain" groups. Further breakdown of the "no" group data is found in Table 3.1.3.

A large group of requesters was also asked if they thought the librarian understood the depth (i.e., how much) of information they needed. About half (49%) the requesters asked this question felt the librarian understood how much information was needed. On the other hand, one third of the requesters asked felt that the librarian did not understand how much information they needed. Table 4 contains the data from this question.

TABLE 4. Librarian's Understanding of the Depth of Information the Requester Needs

Question: "Do you think the librarian understood how much, or the depth of, information you needed?"

	Number of Responses		
Yes	25	49%	Further analysis found in Table 4.1.1 below
Uncertain	9	18%	Further analysis found in Table 4.1.2 below
No	17	33%	Further analysis found in Table 4.1.3 below
Total responses	51*	100%	

*This question was asked in 51 sessions.

Two-thirds (65%) of the requesters who were asked if the librarian knew how much information they needed felt that this was important information for the librarian to have, while a much smaller group (12%) of the requesters

asked did not feel it was important. Table 4.1 presents this data.

Of those requesers who felt that the librarian understood how much information they needed (the "yes" group from Table 4 above), approximately two-thirds (64%) felt this was important knowledge for the librarian to have. Further analysis is found in Table 4.1.1.

Of those requesters who were not sure if the librarian knew how much information they needed (the "uncertain" group from Table 4 above), over two-thirds (67%) felt this was important information for the librarian to have. Further details are given in Table 4.1.2.

Of those requesters who did not feel that the librarian understood how much information they needed (the "no" group from Table 4 above), approximately two-thirds (65%) felt this was important for the librarian to know. This, and related data, are listed in Table 4.1.3.

A comparison of the data in Tables 4.1.1, 4.1.2, and 4.1.3 reveals that all of the response groups ("yes," "no," and "uncertain") to the question, "Did the librarian understand how much, or the depth of, information you needed?" answered the question, "Is it important for the librarian to know how much, or the depth of, information needed?" in a similar way. A majority of the requesters in each group felt that it was important for the librarian to know the depth of, or how much, information they needed.

Another question asked of a number of the requesters

TABLE 4.1. Importance of Librarian's Understanding of Depth of Information Needed.

Question: "Is it important for the librarian to know how much, or the depth of, information needed?"

	Number of Responses		
Yes	33	65%	Further breakdown of the responses to this question found in Tables 4.1.1, 4.1.2, and 4.1.3 below
Uncertain	12	23%	
No	6	12%	
Total responses	51*	100%	

*The 51 requesters who answered the question in Table 4 above also provided responses to this question.

TABLE 4.1.1. Tally of "Yes" Group Responses from Table 4.

Yes	16	64%
Uncertain	8	32%
No	1	4%
Total responses	25	100%

TABLE 4.1.2. Tally of "Uncertain" Group Responses from Table 4.

Yes	6	67%
Uncertain	2	22%
No	1	11%
Total responses	9	100%

TABLE 4.1.3. Tally of "No" Group Responses from Table 4.

Yes	11	65%
Uncertain	2	12%
No	4	23%
Total responses	17	100%

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was whether or not they were satisfied with the selection of search terms that the librarian made. Most who were asked this question (87%) were satisfied with term selection. Responses to this question are tallied in Table 5.

TABLE 5. Requester's Satisfaction with the Selection of Search Terms

Question: "Were you satisfied with the terms selected for the search?"

	Number of Responses	
Yes	33	87%
Uncertain	2	5%
No	3	8%
Total responses	38*	100%

*This question was asked in 38 sessions.

B. Interpersonal Aspects of the Interview

The most general question on the interpersonal aspects of the interview that the requesters were asked was, "Did the librarian show an interest in your request, and a willingness to help you?" Almost all (97%) of the requesters asked this question answered it affirmatively. Table 6 contains this data.

Requesters were also asked what it was that demonstrated to them the librarians' interest and willingness to help. The response given most often (41% of the time) was the librarian's demeanor and cooperation. Another frequently given response (20% of the time) was that the librarian made valuable

TABLE 6. Librarian's Interest and Willingness to Help Requester

Question: "Did the librarian show an interest in your request, and a willingness to help you?"

	Number of Responses	
Yes	56	97%
No	2	3%
Total responses	58*	100%

*This question was asked in 58 sessions.

suggestions during the interview. A third frequently given response (13% of the time) was that the librarian asked useful questions during the interview. In light of the fact that this question was asked in an "open" manner (i.e., the requesters could give any response they thought appropriate), these agreement notes are significant. A full listing of the responses to this question is found in Table 6.1.

Another question the requesters were asked was if they thought the librarian's demeanor had an affect on the interview. Over three-quarters (77%) of the respondents to this question felt that librarian demeanor affected the interview. Responses to this question are found in Table 7.

Requesters who thought librarian demeanor had, or might have had, an effect on the interview were asked to identify any behavior or aspects of demeanor which had either a positive or negative effect. On the positive side, a relaxed approach and pleasant personality, enthusiasm and interest, and eye contact were frequently mentioned. Shyness, nervous-

TABLE 6.1. Factors Indicating Librarian's Interest and Willingness to Help

Question: "What demonstrated the librarian's interest and willingness to help?"

	Number of Responses	
Demeanor and cooperation	22	41%
Suggestions made by librarian	11	20%
Questions asked by librarian	10	19%
Selection of terms, search strategy	4	7%
Attentiveness	4	7%
Explanations given by librarian	3	6%
Total responses	54*	100%

*This question was answered in 46 sessions; 38 requesters answered it once and 8 requesters answered it tiwce, for a total of 54 responses.

TABLE 7. Effect of Librarian's Demeanor on the Interview.

Question: "Did the librarian's demeanor have an effect on the interview?"

	Number of Responses		
Yes	43	77%	Further analysis in Table 7.1 below
Uncertain	4	7%	
No	9	16%	
Total responses	56*	100%	

*This question was asked in 56 sessions.

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ness, or self-consciousness, as well as lack of eye contact, were the most frequently mentioned demeanors perceived to have a negative effect on the interview. Table 7.1 gives a detailed breakdown of responses to this question.

Requesters were asked a similar question with respect to the effect of their demeanor on the interview. Almost

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TABLE 7.1. Librarian Demeanor with Positive or Negative Effects on Interview.

Question: "What aspects of the librarian's demeanor affected the interview, either in a positive or in a negative way?"*

	Number of Responses	
Demeanor with a positive effect:		
Relaxed, informal approach; pleasant personality	16	36%
Enthusiasm, interest	11	24%
Eye contact	9	20%
Efficiency, thoroughness, confidence	7	16%
Patience	2	4%
Total	45	100%
Demeanor with a negative effect:		
Nervousness, shyness, self-consciousness	11	48%
Lack of eye contact	3	13%
Other (all answers in this group given only once)	9	39%
Total	23	100%

*A total of 44 respondents from the "yes" and "uncertain" groups from Table 7 above. There were, however, numerous instances in which respondents named several behaviors, for a total of 68 responses (45 in the positive behavior group and 23 in the negative behavior group).

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two-thirds (65%) of those asked felt that their behavior had an effect on the interview. Responses to this question are broken down in Table 8.

TABLE 8. Effect of the Requester's Demeanor on the Interview.

Question: "Did your demeanor have an effect on the interview?"

	Number of Responses	
Yes	31	65%
Uncertain	13	27%
No	4	8%
Total responses	48*	100%

*This question was answered in 48 sessions.

Only a small number of requesters (six) identified aspects of their own demeanor which had an effect on the interview. Most of the behaviors cited were negative in their effect on the interview. These included: (1) speaking in a sarcastic fashion, (2) behaving in a nervous manner, (3) remaining too quiet, (4) acting more formal than usual, and (5) appearing uninterested in the librarian's activities. One positive behavior, "friendliness," was cited by several requesters as having an impact on the interview.

Finally, requesters were asked whether or not they had confidence in the librarian's ability to perform the search. An overwhelming majority (93%) of the respondents to this

question said they had confidence in the librarian's ability. Complete breakdown of this data is found in Table 9.

TABLE 9. Requester's Confidence in the Librarian's Ability to Perform the Search.

Question: "Did you have confidence in the librarian's ability to perform the search?"

	Number of Responses		
Yes	57	93%	Further analysis in Table 9.1 below
Uncertain	2	3%	
No	2	3%	
Total responses	61*	100%	

*This question was asked in 61 sessions.

When asked what factors inspired confidence in the librarian's abilities, requesters gave a variety of answers. Most commonly given were: past experience with the librarian (27.1%), the librarian's familiarity with, and selection of, search terms (24%), the librarian's familiarity with search tools such as thesauri and computer terminals (15%), and the quality of the questions asked and suggestions made by the librarian (14%). For a complete listing of the responses to this question, see Table 9.1 below.

TABLE 9.1. Reasons for Requester's Confidence in Librarian's Ability.

Questions: "What factors inspired your confidence in the librarian's ability to perform the search?"

	Number of Responses	
Past experience with the librarian	16	27.1%
Librarian's familiarity with, or selection of, terms	14	24.0%
Librarian's familiarity with search tools (i.e., terminal, thesauri)	9	15.0%
Librarian asked good questions, made good suggestions	8	14.0%
Librarian's self-confidence	5	8.0%
Librarian's systematic approach, efficiency	3	5.1%
Requester felt librarian understood the request	2	3.4%
Librarian's persistence in locating search terms, constructing search	2	3.4%
Total responses	59*	100.0%

*Fifty of the requesters who answered the question in Table 9 also responded to this question. There are a number of multiple answers, yielding a total of 59 responses.

V. Summary

Most of the requesters asked felt that the librarian had at least some understanding of their information need. A variety of reasons for this were given by the requesters,

but the most frequently given reasons related to the librarian's use or selection of proper terminology and to the ability of the librarian to ask informed questions or make useful suggestions (see Table 1.1). A majority of the requesters felt that it was important for the librarian to know why they needed information, but less than half of those who were asked actually felt that the librarian understood why they needed information. A significant number of requesters also felt that it was important for the librarian to know how much information they needed, but less than half of those asked actually felt that the librarian knew how much information they needed. Almost all of the requesters asked were satisfied with the search terms the librarian selected.

Most of the requesters felt that the librarian demonstrated an interest in their request and a willingness to help them find the information they needed. Commonly cited reasons for this feeling included the librarian's cordial demeanor and cooperative spirit, useful suggestions made by the librarian, and questions asked by the librarian (see Table 6.1).

A majority of the requesters felt that the librarian's demeanor had an effect on the interview (see Table 7.1). Aspects of demeanor perceived to have a positive effect included the librarian's relaxed and pleasant approach to the interview, librarian's enthusiasm or interest in the request, and eye contact between the librarian and the re-

quester. Demeanors perceived to have a negative effect included shyness or nervousness on the part of the librarian, and lack of eye contact between the librarian and the requester. A majority of the requesters asked also felt that their demeanor had an effect on the interview, but only a few requesters named specific aspects of demeanor, and most of these named (such as speaking sarcastically, remaining too silent, or acting more formal than usual) were negative in their effect on the interview.

Most of the requesters stated that they had confidence in the librarian's ability to perform the search (see Table 9.1). Commonly cited reasons for such confidence included past experience with the librarian; librarian's familiarity with, and selection of, search terms; the librarian's familiarity with search tools such as thesauri and the computer terminal; and the quality of the questions asked, or suggestions made, by the librarian.

VI. Conclusions

A majority of the requesters said that they felt the librarians understood their information needs. Establishing such understanding is one of the primary goals of the presearch interview. The general perception on behalf of the requester that the librarian understood his/her information needs seems to be grounded in: (1) a common feeling among requesters that the librarians were willing to help

them and had at least some interest in their information need; and (2) a general confidence in the librarian's abilities to successfully carry out the search and obtain the information needed. (This confidence is frequently based on past experience, but factors such as the librarian's familiarity with search terms and tools were often mentioned.) Most requesters also felt it important for the librarian to know why they needed information, and how much information they needed, though many of the requesters did not feel the librarians understood these aspects of their information needs. In contrast to this, then, stands the general feeling that the librarians understood the requesters' information needs.

APPENDIX I

List of Questions Used by the
Project Interviewer When Conducting
Stimulated Recall Sessions

1. Do you feel that the librarian understood your actual need for information?

1.1. What made you feel that the librarian understood your information need?

2. Were you satisfied with your presentation of your information need to the librarian?

2.1. What was it about the way you presented your need that made you feel that way?

3. Do you think the librarian knew why you needed the information?

3.1. What did the librarian do or say that made you feel that way?

3.2. Is it important to know why the information is needed?

4. Do you think the librarian understood the depth of, or how much, information you needed?

4.1. What did the librarian do or say that made you feel that way?

4.2. Is it important for the librarian to know the depth of, or how much, information you need?

5. How do you feel about the limitations set for the search? For example, journals only, language, time period covered.

5.1. What did the librarian do or say to establish those limitations?

6. How do you feel about the explanation of potential sources or databases?

6.1. What did the librarian do to make you feel that way?

6.2. Would you have preferred to know more or less?

7. Were you satisfied with the terms selected for the search?

7.1. What did the librarian do or say in order to select the terms?

8. Do you feel that you know everything you need to know related to the search?

8.1. What do you think it was about the way the librarian handled the interview that made you feel that way?

8.2. Would you have preferred to know more or less?

9. Do you know all you need to about what will happen following the interview?

9.1. What did the librarian do or say that makes you feel that way?

9.2. Would you have liked more of an explanation?

10. Did the librarian show an interest in your request and a willingness to help you?

10.1. What demonstrated the librarian's interest and willingness to help?

11. Did the librarian's demeanor have any effect on the interview?

11.1. What aspects of the librarian's demeanor affected the interview, either in a positive or in a negative way?

12. Did your demeanor have any effect on the interview?

12.1. What was it about your demeanor that had an effect?

13. Did you have confidence in the librarian's ability to perform the search?

13.1. What did the librarian do or say that made you feel that way?

14. Now that you have seen the entire videotape, is there anything that you would especially like to tell me about any part of the interview or the interview as a whole?

15. What advice would you give to librarians or library students?

16. How necessary is it for the librarian to have some knowledge of the subject of the search?

APPENDIX II

Questions Selected for Descriptive Analysis

1. Do you feel that the librarian understood your actual need for information?

1.1. What made you feel that the librarian understood your information need?

2. Were you satisfied with your presentation of your information need to the librarian?

3. Do you think the librarian knew why you needed the information?

3.1. Is it important for the librarian to know why the information is needed?

4. Do you think the librarian understood how much, or the depth of, information you needed?

4.1. Is it important for the librarian to know the depth of, or how much, information is needed?

5. Were you satisfied with the terms selected for the search?

6. Did the librarian show an interest in your request, and a willingness to help you?

6.1. What demonstrated the librarian's interest and willingness to help?

7. Did the librarian's demeanor have an effect on the interview?

7.1. What aspects of the librarian's demeanor affected the interview, either in a positive or in a negative way?

8. Did your demeanor have an effect on the interview?

9. Did you have confidence in the librarian's ability to perform the search?

9.1. What factors inspired your confidence in the librarian's ability to perform the search?